

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 AID-20 CEA-02 CIAE-00 COME-00 EB-11

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R 081736Z MAR 74

FM AMEMBASSY LONDON

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8548

AMEMBASSY BONN

AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS

AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN

AMEMBASSY DUBLIN

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AMEMBASSY ROME

AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE

USMISSION OECD PARIS

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: EGEN, EEC, UK

SUBJECT: THE NEW BRITISH GOVERNMENT AND THE EC

REF: EC BRUSSELS 1421

1. SO FAR, THE NEW LABOUR GOVERNMENT HAS GIVEN NO
INDICATION OF HOW IT IS GOING TO CARRY OUT ITS ELEC-
TION PLEDGE OF AN IMMEDIATE AND FUNDAMENTAL RENEGO-
TIATION OF THE EC TERMS OF ENTRY. OFFICIALS RESPONSIB-
LE FOR EC MATTERS AT THE FOREIGN OFFICE, THE DEPART-
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MENT OF TRADE AND INDUSTRY, AND THE MINISTRY OF

AGRICULTURE ARE WAITING WITH CONSIDERABLE CURIOSITY FOR GUIDANCE FROM THEIR NEW MINISTERS.

2. THE QUEEN'S SPEECH ON MARCH 12 COULD GIVE SOME PRELIMINARY INDICATIONS. THE FIRST MAJOR TEST WILL BE THE EC COUNCIL MEETING OF AGRICULTURAL MINISTERS WHICH HAS BEEN POSTPONED AT THE UK'S REQUEST FROM MARCH 11-12 UNTIL LATER IN THE MONTH, PROBABLY MARCH 25-26 (REFTEL). THE MAIN ITEM ON THE COUNCIL'S AGENDA, AGRICULTURAL PRICES, IS DIRECTLY RELEVANT TO BOTH OF THE MAIN RENEGOTIATION OBJECTIVES IN THE LABOUR PARTY'S ELECTION MANIFESTO. THESE WERE "MAJOR CHANGES IN THE COMMON AGRICULTURAL POLICY" AND "NEW AND FAIRER METHODS OF FINANCING THE COMMUNITY BUDGET."

3. THE BRITISH PRESS HAS SPECULATED THAT THE NEW GOVERNMENT MIGHT REFUSE TO AGREE TO INCREASES IN AGRICULTURAL PRICES FOR THE 1974-75 CROP YEAR, OR THAT IT COULD ANNOUNCE THAT IT IS NOT CARRYING OUT THE NEXT STEPS IN THE ALIGNMENT OF ITS AGRICULTURAL PRICES WITH COMMUNITY PRICE LEVELS. THIS IS STRICTLY PRESS SPECULATION, HOWEVER, IT IS CLEAR THAT THE GOVERNMENT HAS NOT YET DECIDED HOW IT IS GOING TO APPROACH THE PRICE ISSUE. FOREIGN SECRETARY CALLAGHAN SAID IN A TV INTERVIEW ON MARCH 4 THAT IN ANY EVENT, "NO ULTIMATUMS" WOULD BE GIVEN TO THE COMMUNITY.

4. P. J. LARDINOIS, THE EC COMMISSIONER RESPONSIBLE FOR AGRICULTURE, CAME TO LONDON ON MARCH 8, TO GIVE A SPEECH AT THE FARMER'S CLUB. HE ALSO MET WITH THE NEW UK MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE, FREDERICK PEART, FRG AGRICULTURE MINISTER ERTL WILL VISIT LONDON NEXT WEEK.

SOHM

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